I Appoint *John Wright*, and *Richard Chiſwel*, to Print this REPORT, Peruſed by me, According to the Order of the HOUSE of COMMONS; And that no other Perſon preſume to Print it. *Decemb.* 11*th.* 1680.

Wi WILLIAMS, *Speaker.*

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Wi WILLIAMS, *Speaker.*

THE

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE,

For Receiving

INFORMATIONS

CONCERNING THE

Popiſh Plot;

Upon the Complaint of

Mr. Peter Norris.

Preſented to the

HOUSE of COMMONS,

Upon *Thurſday* the *9th.* day of *Decemb.* 1680.

LONDON,

Printed for *John Wright*, at the Crown on *Ludgate-hill*, and *Richard Chiſwell*, at the Roſe and Crown in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard. 1680.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE, For Receiving INFORMATIONS CONCERNING THE Popish Plot;

Upon the Complaint of

Mr. Peter Norris.

Dedicated to the

HOUSE of COMMONS,

Upon Thursday the 9th. day of Decemb. 1680.

LONDON,

Printed for John Wright, at the Crown on Ludgate-hill. and Richard Chiswell, at the Rofe and Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1680.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE For Receiving INFORMATIONS Concerning the Popiſh Plot,

Upon the COMPLAINT of Mr. *Peter Norris*, preſented to the Houſe of COMMONS upon *Thurſday Decemb.* 9. 1680.

UPon conſideration of the Information given at the Barr by Mr. *Peter Norris* and Referred to this Committee,

Reſolved by this Committee, that the Examination of this matter be Reported Specially.

This Committee in the firſt place, after hearing of the ſaid *Norris* his Complaint, that ſeveral Papers were taken from him, ſent for the ſaid Papers which were informed then to be in a Cheſt in the *Council Chamber*, which Papers were brought to this Committee by an Inventory which the ſaid *Norris* then acknowledged to be all, and they ſtill remain with this Committee.

In the next place, they proceeded to examine upon what occaſion the ſaid *Norris* was ſent beyond Sea; which not only by the ſaid Papers, but alſo by a Certificate delivered to the Chairman of this Committee from the Earl of *Eſſex*, and divers other Informations as well as the ſaid *Norris* his Inſtructions given by Dr. *Tonge*, was to fetch over one *Dowdall* an *Iriſh* Prieſt, who had been converſant with the Prieſts in *France* and *Flanders*, who managed the Plot both in *England* and *Ireland*, and mixing himſelf among them, was privy to the whole Plot, which the ſaid *Dowdall* by ſeveral Letters had made known to Dr. *Tonge*, which Letters were perused by the Earl of *Eſſex*, and alſo ſatisfaction was given by a known Merchant in *London*, that the ſaid *Dowdall* was an honeſt man, of good underſtanding, and might be credited.

Then the Committee proceeded to inquire, who at any time had knowledge of the ſending over for the ſaid *Dowdall*, and found by an Order of Council, bearing date the eighteenth day of *July* 1679. that the ſaid *Dowdall* by the name of *Edward Dowdall*, was permitted to come from *Dover* and ſtay for a Month, but in that Order there is no mention of *Dowdall*'s being a Prieſt. And it likewiſe appears to this Committee, that not long after the ſaid Order for his coming over, *Dowdall* dyed, and not without ſuſpicion that it was a Violent Death: but it doth not appear to this Committee, that the Death of *Dowdall* was known in *England* till after the Return of *Norris*, who was ſent to fetch the ſaid *Dowdall* over, which was about Ten Months after

after the Date of the ſaid Order of Council.

Upon which, this Committee proceeded to Examine, how it came to paſs, that the ſaid *Norris* was in ſuch danger beyond Sea, and particularly at his coming aboard the Packet-Boat at *Calais*, and likewiſe his Impriſonment at *Dover* in the Common Priſon, and his being brought from *Dover* by a Meſſenger, and they found the Cauſe of it to be a Deſcription given of *Peter Norris* to Secretary *Jenkins* the Twenty Ninth of *May* 1688. in theſe words, Peter Norris, *ſome call him* Morris *a* Scotch-man, *handſome, neat Face, ſanguine Complexion, ſhort Noſe, bald-pated, white Wigg, ſlender Body, little Stature, bred and Smooth in Diſcourſe, ſpeaking* French; *aged Thirty Four Years more or leſs, Taylor by Trade*: and under this Deſcription, written with another Hand, and Ink theſe words (*viz.*) *Went into* France *on* Wedneſday *was three weeks to bring with him a Prieſt*. Thereupon this Committee proceeded to Examine, who brought this Deſcription to the ſaid Secretary, and where and by whom it was drawn, with all the Circumſtances that they could find about it. And firſt they found, that *Thomas Sheridon* a Gentleman, who affirmed himſelf a Proteſtant born in *Ireland*, heretofore employed in Collecting the Revenues there, and lately with the Duke at his Court at *Bruſſells*, and came over with him in the ſame Yacht, confeſſed upon his Examination, that he carryed the ſaid Deſcription to the ſaid Secretary; but it being ſhewed him, he denyed the writing any part of it, ſave the laſt Line; but confeſſed that it was written and brought to him by one *Anthony Day* Doctor of

Phyſick to the Late Army in *Flanders*. Whereupon the ſaid *Sheridon* was commanded to produce the ſaid *Day*, and with him to attend.

Dr. *Day* and Mr. *Sheridon* both appearing were examined ſeverally.

And firſt the ſaid *Day*, who confeſt himſelf a Papiſt, and pretended very little knowledge of Mr. *Sheridon*, but that coming to give him a viſit, which he had not done of ſix weeks before, Mr. *Sheridon* began to diſcourſe of News, and particularly of the Plot; to which the ſaid Doctor replyed, that now the whole Plot would be diſcovered and laid open; for he heard there was one gone beyond Sea to fetch over a Prieſt that knew of the whole Plot; and doth not remember any thing more at that time but common diſcourſe. But ſome few dayes after meeting with Mr. *Sheridon*, the ſaid Mr. *Sheridon* deſired him to deſcribe the perſon that was ſo ſent over; the ſaid Dr. *Day* replyed, that he knew not the perſon that was gone, nor the Prieſt he was to fetch: but that *John Butler*, keeper of a Brandy-ſhop near the French Embaſſadours upon diſcourſe had told him ſo; to whom Mr. *Sheridon* deſired him to go and get the deſcription, which he did accordingly. And the deſcription being ſhewed him, confeſſed he writ it from his mouth, ſave the laſt line: But ſaith, that perſon is now dead who gave him the ſaid Deſcription, but his wife is living.

Mr. *Sheridon* being then called in and examined, ſaid, He had no great acquaintance with the ſaid Doctor, and ſeldome ſaw him but upon a viſit, which happily might be once a week

a week or the like; Confeſſeth, That the ſaid Doctor told him as News, the Plot would now be laid open, for there was one ſent over into *France* to fetch a Prieſt that knew of the whole Plot: and further ſaith, That he that went over knew as much of the Plot as any man in *England*. Whereupon the ſaid *Sheridon* Confeſſeth, That he went ſhortly after, but remembers not how long, to Secretary *Jenkins*, and told him that there was one gone over into *France* that knew as much of the Plot as any man, and that he went over to fetch a Prieſt that alſo knew the whole Plot, which he the ſaid *Sheridon* ſuppoſed was to be a Witneſs: Upon which the ſaid Secretary commanded him the ſaid *Sheridon* to give him a deſcription of the perſon ſo ſent over: but remembers no other diſcourſe at that time; But that ſome ſhort time after, but remembers not how long, he met with Mr. *Day*, who gave him the deſcription in the preſence of Mr. *John Wilſon* of the *Middle Temple*, which he ſhortly after delivered to the Secretary, and uſed as he remembers, only theſe words, Sir, Here is the deſcription of the perſon I mentioned to you.

After this Deſcription ſo delivered to the Secretary, a Letter was written by Mr. *Cooke*, (which Mr. *Secretary* declared at the Committee he would take upon himſelf) in theſe words following,

White-Hall, May 31. 1680.

SIR,

THe Right Honourable Sir *Leoline Jenkins*, one of his Majesties Principal Secretaries of State, being hastily called this day to wait upon his Majesty at *Windsor*, hath commanded me to send you the enclosed description of a person, who, if he shall happen to come from *France* and land at your Port, Mr. Secretary saith, you will do the King and Kingdome a great service if you will keep a strict Eye upon him and the company that shall arrive with him, till they be all brought before Mr. Mayor, or other chief Magistrate of your Town, whom Mr. Secretary desires to offer the said persons the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy; and in case of their or any of their refusal of the same, to secure them and deal with them according to Law, giving Mr. Secretary an account with what speed may be, of all the proceedings in this affair. If such a person as is here described should come and make no bones of taking the aforesaid Oaths, yet in case Mr. Mayor or other chief Magistrate before whom they are brought, shall have reasonable ground to suspect that he is the man so described, and that he hath one or more in his company who may be reasonably suspected to be Priests, some handsome course is to be taken to detain them till Mr. Secretary can be acquainted with what is done, and send such further directions as shall be thought necessary. Mr. Mayors

ors authority, with your Prudence and Zeal in this matter, will I hope produce a good effect. Upon this Command I am

SIR,

Your very Humble Servant,

John Cooke.

Pray favour me with a Line that this comes safe to your hands.

Vera Copia. *John Pepper.*

Upon which *Norris* was committed to the Common Prison, as is mentioned in his Complaint. All which being of more than an ordinary nature, this Committee thought not fit to give any opinion, but humbly referred it to the Wisdome of this House.

FINIS.